

United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

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Instruction Memorandum No. MT-2004-003

Expires: 9/30/05

To: State Management Team

From: State Director

Subject: Policy on Off-Highway Vehicle (OHV) Travel in the Course of Official Duty

In June 2003, I signed the OHV Record of Decision and Plan Amendment for Montana, North Dakota, and South Dakota. This decision means that on 5.8 million acres of BLM-administered lands in the three states, travel by motorized wheeled vehicles is limited to existing roads and trails. Cross-country travel is no longer allowed, with some exceptions.

One of the exceptions is for BLM employees in the performance of their necessary administrative and emergency business. Examples of necessary administrative use are: Prescribed fire, noxious weed control, revegetation, surveying, and law enforcement. Where possible, agency personnel performing administrative functions that necessitate cross-country travel should place a sign or notice in the area where they are working to identify for the public the authorized administrative function. A sign in the vehicle used to transport the OHV to the site may also be an appropriate place to notify the public.

If it is necessary to drive cross-country for official business, we should remember to do the following: Avoid riparian areas, steep slopes, and areas with important wildlife habitat; wash vehicles after use in weed-infested areas; and travel with care near wildlife and cultural sites. As we begin to implement the decision, we need to be role models for appropriate OHV travel. This also includes the OHV we use in the performance of our duties. Be sure all of our OHVs are street legal.

Whenever the opportunity arises, please help to spread the word about our new policy to personnel from other agencies, permittees, your neighbors and friends, and other OHV users. One of the key issues to discuss this year with hunters is the elimination of motorized wheeled cross-country travel for game retrieval.

As BLM employees, we are trusted with an important mission and opportunity to set an example for all OHV users. Please keep this in mind as you travel the many miles necessary to do your work.

Signed by: Chun C. Wong, Acting

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